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Statement from Kris Perry, Executive Director, First 5 California

Regarding Commitment to Children During State Budget Crisis

First 5 California shares the concern of the Governor, the Legislature and all Californians about the state's budget crisis and how it could hurt our youngest children.

Of equal concern is another fiscal reality – Proposition 10 revenues will greatly decline within the next five years.

First 5 has developed long-term fiscal plans to safeguard the 2.7 million critical services we provide to families across the state. Without this planning, our state would risk losing the largest and most stable funding source of health coverage for young children and be forced to limit access to what experts consider some of the best preschools in the nation.

To address these competing priorities, First 5 is looking for additional ways to help the state during this fiscal crisis that upholds its voter mandate and sustains critical First 5 services.

About First 5 California

First 5 California, also known as the California Children and Families Commission, was established after voters passed Proposition 10 in November 1998, adding a 50 cents-per-pack tax on cigarettes to fund education, health, child care and other programs for expectant parents and children up to age 5. For more information please visit www.First5California.com.

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